may be amended so that there remains no ambiguity in the interpretation of this section relating to powers of TRAI for fixing the terms and conditions of interconnectivity between the service providers.

(iv) TRAI has also proposed an amendment in TRAI Act so that TRAI may directly impose penalty on the operators not meeting the QoS parameters.

Regarding action on complainants/suggestions, the individual consumer complaints received in TRAI are forwarded to service providers for redressal. The Telecom Consumers Protection Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007 also provide a framework for dealing with complaints alleging violation of the TRAI Act or regulations made thereunder or directions issued or orders made under the TRAI Act, and for dealing with complaints which are of a generic nature or complaints alleging the practices adopted by the service providers adversely affective the interest of the consumers. Such complaints are referred to service providers for investigation and for finding out root cause of such complaints and the service providers have to redress such complaints within one month and to take remedial measures for addressing systemic deficiency, if any within two months. TRAI takes into account, the various suggestions received by it while finalizing its recommendations, regulations, orders, directions, etc.

Quality of service by telecom service providers

1021. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:
PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the telecom service providers have failed to provide uninterrupted and trouble free services to its subscribers;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether Government owned BSNL/MTNL are also not providing services to mobile subscribers as per their satisfaction norms;

(d) if so, the corrective steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has laid down the benchmarks for Cellular Mobile Telephone Services through a Regulation on Quality of Service for Basic and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services, 2005 dated 1.7.2005. TRAI monitors the performance of the service providers through the quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) and monthly congestion reports submitted by the

service providers. The above said regulation has network related parameters such as Accumulated Down Time for Community Isolation, Call Setup Success Rate, Standalone Dedicated Control Channel (SDCCH)/Paging Channel Congestion [Benchmark = <1.00%], Traffic Channel (TCH), Congestion [Benchmark = <2.00%], Service Access Delay [Average of 100 calls =<15 sec] and Point of Interconnection (PoI) Congestion [Benchmark = <0.5%]. As per the Performance Monitoring Report for the quarter ending September, 2008, some of the service providers are not meeting some of the Quality of Service benchmarks in some of the service areas.

(c) As per the Performance Monitoring Report for the quarter ending September, 2008 the services of BSNL and MTNL are comparable to that of other private service providers.

(d) TRAI has been taking various steps to ensure quality of service by basic service and cellular mobile service providers. The steps taken are given below:—

1. TRAI has been monitoring the performance of Cellular Mobile Operators against the benchmarks given for the various parameters in the Regulation on Quality of Service (QoS) of Basic and Cellular Mobile Telephone Service, 2005 dated 1.7.05 through Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports submitted by the service providers. In addition, POI congestion is being monitored on monthly basis also on the basis of reports submitted by the service providers.

2. Being deeply concerned about the continuous deterioration in POI congestion and also the service providers not meeting the QoS benchmarks, TRAI has issued a direction on 29th November, 2005 to all Cellular Mobile Service Providers to ensure, by 31st December 2005, that the quality of service parameters, including the level of POI congestion, in its network should be strictly within the benchmark laid down by the TRAI. On analyzing the Performance Monitoring Report of the Cellular Mobile Operators for the quarter ending December, 2005, it was revealed that while there has been some improvement in meeting the QoS benchmarks there has been increasing congestion at the POIs. TRAI, therefore, decided to issue show cause notices to those operators in whose network the number of POI having congestion above the benchmark have increased and accordingly issued show cause notices to six mobile operators on 6.3.2006. These operators have since moved Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) against the show cause notices and the matter is subjudice.

3. TRAI also undertakes assessment of the Quality Service of Basic and Cellular Mobile Services through an independent agency. The results of these audit and survey are widely published for public/Stakeholders knowledge.

4. TRAI has taken several steps to address interconnection issues which are directly related to congestion at the Points of Interconnection (POIs) due to which the inter-network communication is affected. These steps taken by TRAI are given below:—

a. TRAI issued the Interconnection (Reference Interconnection Offer) Regulation, 2002 which specified well defined terms for interconnection to be offered by service providers with significant market power to other operators;

b. TRAI *vide* its Direction dated 22.7.2003 directed to all service providers that direct connectivity should be made between all service providers within 3 months.

c. TRAI has also issued a directive dated 31.12.2003 on non disconnection of POIs without informing the interconnecting party and TRAI.

d. TRAI has issued a direction on 7th June 2005 to all service providers "to provide Interconnection on the request of the Interconnection seeker within 90 days of the applicable payment make by the Interconnection seeker".

All these Regulation/Directions have been challenged in TDSAT and the court has set aside the first three (a, b and c) above. The Court has also ruled that the power of TRAI to fix the terms and conditions of interconnection are subject to the license conditions and the existing interconnection agreements between the operators. TRAI has appealed in Supreme Court of India against the decision of TDSAT in these cases. All these cases are subjudice.

(e) The provision of Interconnection by BSNL is being closely monitored on a monthly basis.

(5) TRAI *vide* its letter dated 13th January, 2006 had pointed out to Department of Telecommunications (DoT) that due to anomalies and inconsistencies in the terms and conditions of the license agreements it has become difficult to ensure effective interconnection between the service providers. Therefore, the authority had requested DoT to suitably amend a few clauses of the CMTS and Unified Access License Agreements making it clear that Interconnection with other service providers shall be as per Orders/Regulations/Directives issued by the TRAI from time to time. TRAI had also suggested that para (ii) of Section 11(1)(b) of TRAI Act may be amended so that there remains no ambiguity in the interpretation of this section relating to powers of TRAI for fixing the terms and conditions of interconnectivity between the service providers.

(6) TRAI has also proposed an amendment in TRAI Act so that TRAI may directly impose penalty on the operators not meeting the QoS parameters.

(7) TRAI has recently issued a Consultation Paper on review of Quality of Service of basic and cellular mobile telephone service, in which it is proposed to review the benchmark for various Quality of Service parameters, including the parameters for assessing the Customer Perception of Service and the methodology for computing Customer Perception of Service. This Consultation Paper also proposes publication of information relating to Quality of Service, which will act as a deterrent to service providers against poor quality.

(8) Follow-up action is taken up with the service providers, wherever deficiencies noticed in achieving the Quality of Service benchmarks.

Modernisation of post offices

1022. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to modernize all the post offices in the country with latest facilities etc.;

(b) if so, the number of post offices modernized during the years 2007-08 and 2008-09;

(c) the total investment to be made by Government on the modernization of post offices during 2009-10;

(d) whether Government plans to diversify post offices in other fields; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Modernization of post offices across the country with latest facilities is an ongoing process subject to availability of resources and technical feasibility.

(b) During the year 2007-08 and 2008-09, the Department computerized 1411 post offices and modernized 500 Post Offices.

(c) A sum of Rs. 287 Crores has been projected during 2009-10 for computerization and modernization of Post Offices.

(d) and (e) The Post Offices offer a diverse range of Communication, Information, Logistics and Financial Services. New products and services are introduced from time to time subject to feasibility.

Calls between cities without STD

1023. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that land line subscribers of Delhi and Mumbai can talk in between without any STD facilities; and

(b) if so, what is preventing the Government to extend identical facilities to other metropolitan cities like Chennai and Kolkata?